



LINN COUNTY INTERNAL **SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

2023-2025





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Leadership	3
Acknowledgements	4
Purpose of the Plan	5
The Planning Process	5
The Framework	6
Equity, Access, Feasibility, and Fiscally Smart	6
Goals and Objectives	7-10
Implementation	11
Monitoring Success	11
Appendix A: Glossary	12
Appendix B: Action Step Prioritization Matrix	13-16
Appendix C: Goal Matrices	17-20

Cover photos by CalCam AP

Linn County Mission

Provide all customers the most satisfying products while maintaining sound fiscal management in order to enhance the quality of life in Linn County.

MESSAGE FROM **LEADERSHIP**

Message from the **Linn County Board of Supervisors**

When we think about why sustainability matters, we often come back to our children and the desire most of us share to provide them with the best—a quality education; access to good, healthy foods; and the ability for them to play in clean parks and breathe fresh air. Moving Linn County in the direction of a more sustainable future helps to not only ensure a bright future for our children but improves the quality of our lives today.

Economic development, quality affordable housing, and prosperous, and healthy communities are all positive outcomes of sustainability planning. We are excited that Linn County continues to move in a sustainable direction with this first-ever Linn County Internal Sustainability Plan, recognizing that we all have a role to play in crafting a more sustainable and resilient present and future.

Message from the **Sustainability Director**

Sustainability is a systems approach which involves all of us, from residents to industries, businesses and schools, and of course, local government. It is exciting to see the enthusiasm from Linn County departments as well as the broader community for this first-ever Linn County Sustainability Plan. People are ready to be a part of the inclusive and innovative action put forth in this plan that aims to bring together both the rural and urban communities of Linn County.

Linn County has a history of sustainability action and this first-ever sustainability plan is another example of our local government's commitment to this work. We understand that we have a responsibility to plan for future demand while also being good stewards of taxpayer dollars in the present. The plan provides a roadmap for how our departments can better serve the Linn County community through sustainability goals and objectives.

In a time when it feels like every issue is divisive, the collaborative spirit that helped to develop this plan should serve as a beacon of hope to us all. The ability of our steering committee and leadership to reconcile competing departmental interests, learn new ways of doing, and share best practices has demonstrated that each of us has something to offer and each of us has something to learn.

Regardless of where you are in your personal understanding of sustainability, I hope that you will join in on this work, in whatever way makes sense for you.



District 1
Linn County Supervisor
Stacey Walker



District 2
Linn County Supervisor
Ben Rogers



District 3
Linn County Supervisor
Louis J. Zumbach

Pictured above are the members of the Linn County Board of Supervisors when this report was completed in December 2022.



Linn County Sustainability Director
Tamara Marcus

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Linn County Sustainability Department would like to thank Darcy Hitchcock, author of the Step by Step Guide to Sustainability Planning for her guidance on the planning process for this report as well as staff at the City of Sedona, Arizona. We would also like to thank the Linn County Board of Supervisors for their support of this work and the Steering Committee composed of Linn County staff for all of their time and effort throughout the development of this plan. Additionally, we offer thanks to Elizabeth Weems, Ayla Boylen, and Scott Koepke for their support in creating figures and providing photos for this report.

Linn County Board of Supervisors (when this report was completed in December 2022)

District 1 Stacey Walker

District 2 Ben Rogers

District 3 Louis J. Zumbach

Internal Steering Committee

Joi Alexander, Communications Director

Ashley Balias, Community Outreach and Assistance Director

BJ Dvorak, Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Coordinator

Lisa Powell, Human Resources Director

Darrin Gage, Policy & Administration Director

John Gallegher, Soil Conservation Resource Conservationist

Major Gerald Hansel, Linn County Sheriff's Office

Tom Hardecopf, former LIFTS Director

Dustin Hinrichs, Public Health Air Quality Branch Supervisor

Megan Huck, Secondary Roads Roadside Manager

Britt Hutchins, Purchasing Director

Stephanie Lientz, Zoning Manager

Kent Rector, Conservation Nature Center Manager

Joyce Sramek, Senior Facilities Worker

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability is ensuring that we satisfy the needs of this generation without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The Purpose of the Plan

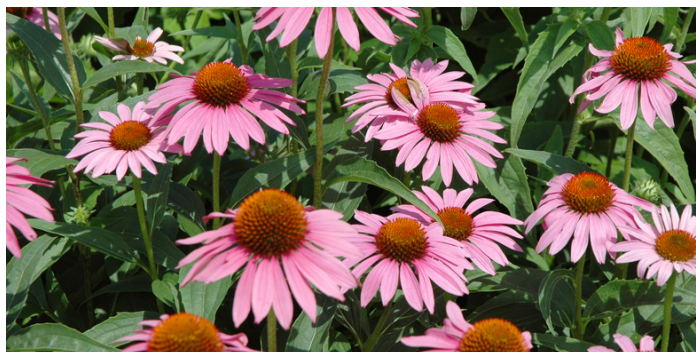
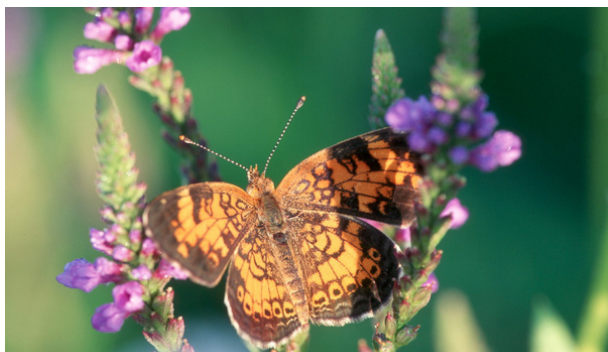
Linn County has a history of supporting sustainable development and promoting resilient communities. The Linn County Board of Supervisors signed a resolution in 2017 in support of the objectives of the **Paris Climate Agreement** and approved Linn County's registration in the **"We Are Still In" coalition**, which marked Linn County's commitment to continue honoring the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the principles of energy efficiency, energy conservation, and sustainability. Linn County includes high energy efficiency standards in construction projects, encourages use of alternative and renewable energy through the Linn County Comprehensive Plan, and promotes personal health and environmental protection in the Linn County Strategic Plan. Linn County received a Gold designation from the national SolSmart program for making it faster, easier, and more affordable for homes and businesses to go solar and is a designated Small Wind Innovation Zone (SWIZ) by the Iowa Utilities Board. Linn County is also a partner in the 1,000 Acres Pollinator Initiative, a public/private collaborative effort to restore 1,000 public land acres to a diverse monarch and pollinator habitat throughout the communities of Linn County.

In 2019, the Linn County Board of Supervisors declared a climate crisis. In 2020, the Board of Supervisors created Linn County's first Sustainability Department and appointed members to the newly created Sustainability & Resiliency Advisory Committee. In 2021, Linn County's Sustainability Department released the County's first **greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions** inventory. The inventory is the first step in documenting emission levels and sources of GHG emissions in Linn County and creating a climate action plan to reduce GHG emissions locally.

This plan provides the new opportunity to coordinate sustainability efforts across Linn County departments. This is a plan intended to be used for internal focus -- goals, objectives, and action steps are ones that County staff and elected officials have more direct control over. By bringing together existing best practices and identifying areas of opportunity for the County to meet its emission reduction goals, we hope to cultivate more resilient and economically sound communities.

The Planning Process

Our steering committee participated in an in-person workshop where background information and training on sustainability frameworks and concepts was conducted. This helped develop shared definitions of terms related to sustainability. Steering committee members brainstormed in focused small groups potential high-level goals, and large group discussion helped to align these goals along a priority matrix. Following this work session, small groups were created corresponding to the four high-level goals identified by the group and meetings were held to discuss specific objectives and action steps achievable in a three-year timeline.



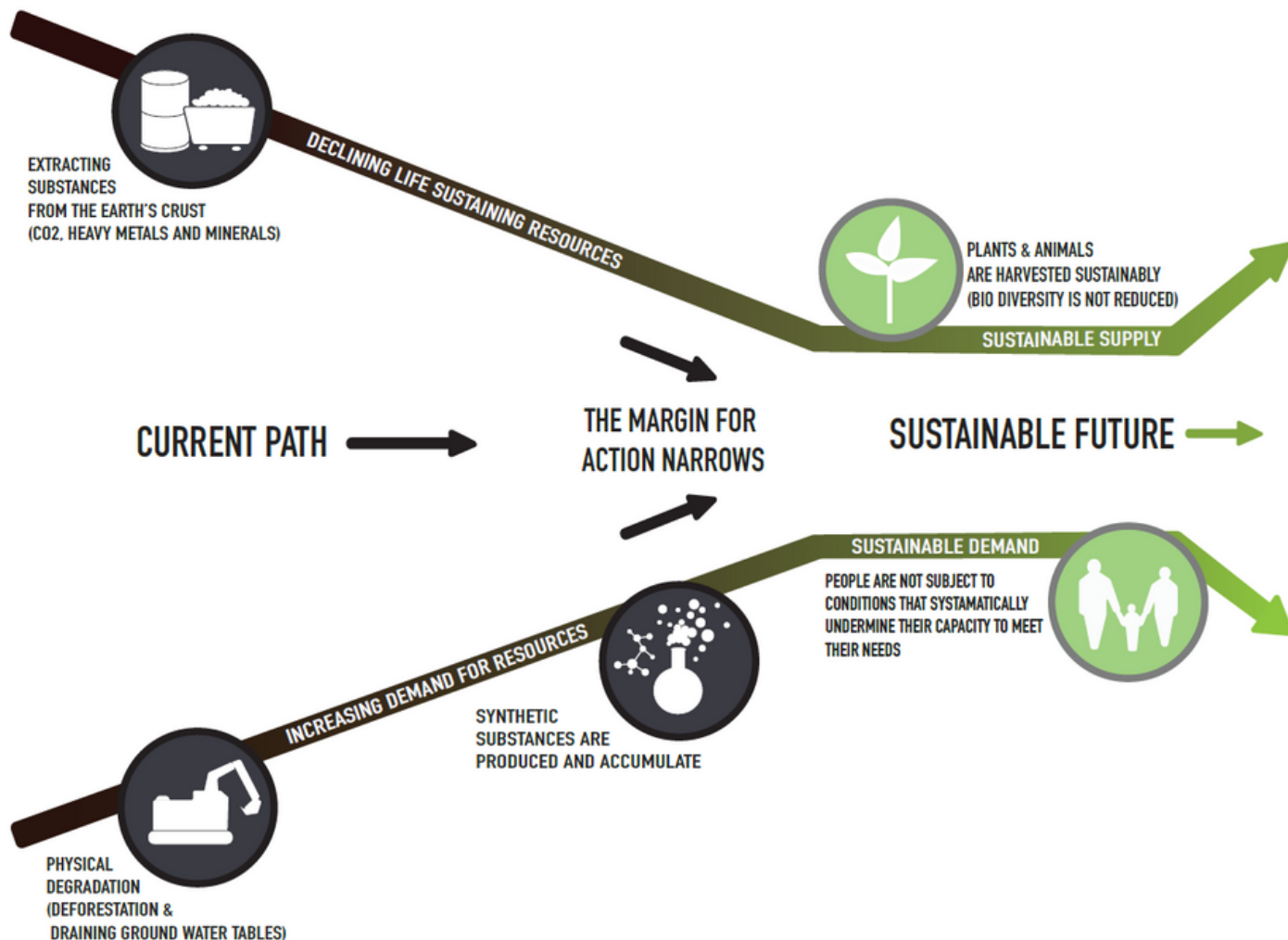
The Framework

This plan uses the **Natural Step framework** (Move, Take, Make, and Hurt). These concepts correspond to scientific principles that explain the basic chemical, physical, and biological processes of the Earth (see below). Additionally, the **Triple Bottom Line framework**— people, planet, and prosperity was woven in via prioritization exercises of plan action steps described in more detail below.

Equity, Access, Feasibility, and Fiscally Smart

In addition to considering opportunities that encourage economic growth and responsible use of taxpayer dollars, the plan prioritizes actions that contribute to efforts that improve equity, improve access to resources, and are feasible with existing technologies. Appendix B shows the prioritization framework our steering committee used to accomplish this- action steps that aimed to improve access to resources by the most vulnerable, worked to improve the health of our community, and were considered to be cost-effective, for example, were prioritized.

Image adapted from The Natural Step



GOAL 1:**BE PREPARED FOR FUTURE DISASTERS**

Our staff and infrastructure will meet the needs of our community in times of disaster and in-between.

Objective 1: Reduce barriers and improve access to disaster resources & supportive services

Action Step: Implement a Quality Improvement Assessment to see where current interventions are meeting needs AND what we can do to make them more effective (funding, policy, collaboration, etc.)

Action Step: Identify strategies for addressing mold issues that still remain from the August 2020 derecho

Action Step: Hire **Resiliency Coordinator**

Objective 2: Improve community disaster response systems

Action Step: Explore what geographic locations of Linn County are receiving disaster and preparedness information to identify gaps in services

Action Step: Review County funding to nonprofits with missions related to disaster recovery

Action Step: Develop deployable **resiliency units**

Objective 3: Increase knowledge and understanding of emergency response for elected officials and staff responders

Action Step: Require FEMA/Emergency Support Function (ESF) training for any person who will work in or with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during disaster response

Action Step: Hold quarterly all-hazard drills through the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) that involve all jurisdictions in Linn County, including nonprofits

Action Step: Develop a Crisis Communications Policy

GOAL 2: REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Objective 1: Increase sourcing of locally generated, renewable energy

Action Step: Complete regular energy audits of County buildings to be updated every 3-5 years and compare financial performance with other County buildings

Action Step: Identify opportunities for on-site solar on County-owned land

Objective 2: Encourage use of locally sourced products by Linn County departments

Action Step: Create a list of purchase types to be evaluated during annual review, including ongoing consumables

Action Step: Develop an environmentally preferred purchasing policy (EPP)

Action Step: Provide staff resources to train employees on EPP

Objective 3: Encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy use in Linn County

Action Step: Review existing policies and renewable energy codes to identify opportunities to incentivize renewable energy adoption by residents and businesses

Action Step: Assess current level of renewable energy adoption by residents

Action Step: Organize community outreach/education opportunities around solar opportunities

Action Step: Apply for state and federal funding to ensure equitable access of renewable technology

Objective 4: Increase use of fuel-efficient/alternative-fuel vehicles, equipment, and alternative transportation methods

Action Step: Complete fuel use audit to establish baseline consumption and cost

Action Step: Develop a Green Fleet Policy

Action Step: Identify alternative-fuel options for vehicles within five years of being replaced

Action Step: Provide incentives for employees who can/willing to carpool, use public transportation and/or bike/walk to work

Objective 5: Engage residents in community-wide emission reduction strategies

Action Step: Establish a County committee to lead and coordinate the development of a community-wide sustainability plan and engage community members in the implementation

Action Step: Create or participate in marketing/outreach/incentive program(s) to achieve waste or energy use reduction via education and outreach

GOAL 3:**SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS AND FARMERS**

Objective 1: Use Integrated Pest Management on County lands for weeds, disease, and insect management to minimize chemical use

Action Step: Assess existing County pest management processes for improvement (Roadside Program and Conservation Department)

Action Step: Discuss reduction in chemical use for County-owned facilities within city limits with County Facilities staff

Action Step: Enroll Facilities in the Good Neighbor Iowa program through UNI (goodneighbor-iowa.org)

Action Step: Explore potential locations for **pocket prairies** on County building sites and identify resources for long-term maintenance

Objective 2: Invest in water diversion, capture, and infiltration technologies and practices

Action Step: Incorporate rain gardens, **bioswales**, and other eco-landscaping techniques on available County-owned land

Action Step: Explore rainwater harvesting opportunities at County parks

Action Step: Explore community partnerships to assist with long term maintenance

Objective 3: Improve water quality

Action Step: Coordinate with partners to encourage implementation of **regenerative agricultural practices**

Action Step: Prioritize native tree planting and preserving old trees

Objective 4: Implement Linn County Food Systems Assessment

Action Step: Inform Linn County residents on the why and how eating local foods supports our local producers through targeted education efforts

Action Step: Explore ways we can alter our local regulations to support alternative revenue streams for fruit and vegetable producers

Action Step: Assess the barriers preventing meat and produce processors from locating in Linn County

GOAL 4: IMPROVE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Objective 4.1: Incorporate more green space into the **built environment**

Action Step: Inventory and audit Greenspace on county-owned land to examine existing use

Action Step: Create a greenspace masterplan incorporating gardens, **pocket prairies, resiliency hubs,** etc. on Linn County property

Objective 4.2: Perform regular audits of energy usage in County buildings

Action Step: Complete an internal GHG inventory to measure emissions from County building operations

Action Step: Set up the tools Linn County currently has to measure energy

Action Step: Explore automated energy assessment tools

Objective 4.3: Integrate sustainable guidelines into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and other capital projects, and Planning & Development policies

Action Step: Prioritize at least one of the following in new projects- storm water management, energy efficiency, renewable energy, EV ready requirements where applicable

Action Step: Review ordinances and codes to better integrate low impact development practices

Action Step: Adopt codes/ordinances, redevelopment/design standards, and/or programs that facilitate ADA-compliant infill, redevelopment, and adaptable buildings

Objective 4.4: Incorporate native landscaping practices into management of County properties

Action Step: Create a plant list of natives that includes native and pollinator-friendly plants for community education and use on County properties

Action Step: Provide staff training on benefits and best management practices for native plants and pollinator friendly landscapes

Action Step: Establish native plant demonstration gardens

Implementation

The Sustainability Director will manage small work groups with the necessary County staff associated with each of the objectives and action steps outlined in the plan. More information regarding the timeline of each action, as well as which departments are involved is included in appendix C. These groups will develop implementation plans specific to each action which will include a proposed budget for the action and sources of funding leveraging a combination of current departmental budgets, offer requests to the Linn County Board of Supervisors, and federal and state grant funding.

The Sustainability Department will produce an annual progress report providing updates related to each goal and an explanation of planned work for the upcoming year. The plan will be reviewed and updated in three years. Linn County's Human Resources Department will help to develop materials to disseminate details of this plan and its progress to new and current employees. The Sustainability Department will engage with residents through speaking engagements and will work with Linn County's Communications Department to share information related to this plan through Linn County Linn County's website, social media, and local media outlets.

Monitoring Success

The plan uses an existing metric reporting structure familiar to Linn County employees -- key performance indicators (KPIs). As part of the implementation plan development process described above, an appropriate KPI to measure success will be identified or created for each action in the plan.



Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Bioswales

A shallow ditch or channel with vegetation that receives runoff to act as a natural alternative to storm sewers or gutters and can aid in filtering out pollutants.

Built Environment

Man-made structures that were created or modified to support human activity such as the places where people work, live, and play that intervene with the environment.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The total sum of various man-made and natural pollutants (such as carbon dioxide and methane) that trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, known as the Greenhouse Effect, which influence the planet's overall energy balance.

Natural Step Framework

A scientific-based tool to guide individuals and organizations in planning efforts that will result in successful execution of sustainable programs.

Paris Climate Agreement/Accords

An international commitment signed in 2016 by 194 countries to reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change with a focus on decreasing global Greenhouse Gas Emissions in an effort to lower the Earth's overall temperature.

Pocket Prairie

A small area of land, less than one acre, that is dominated by native grasses, wildflowers, or shrubs fostering a pollinator-friendly habitat.

Regenerative Agricultural Practices

A holistic land-management approach to farming that creates a lower or net positive impact on the environment by restoring soil biodiversity, improving the water cycle, and increasing resiliency.

Resiliency Coordinator

A position within the Linn County Sustainability Department that is responsible for implementing strategies that promote resiliency against events of environmental-related extreme weather, implementation of emergency respondedness procedures, and the coordination of recovery efforts in the wake of such incidents.

Resiliency Hub

Permanent facilities that are community-serving with the purpose of providing residents with access to critical resources such as food and information before, during, and after a natural disaster event.

Resiliency Units

Similar to the resiliency hub, resiliency units are mobile units that are accessible to all communities in the event of a natural disaster to provide immediate and distinct recovery resources.

Sustainability

The Environmental Protection Agency defines sustainability efforts as those with the intent to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations.

Triple Bottom Line Framework

The principles of people, plant, and prosperity are the driving forces of sustainability, and through the prioritization of them, sustainable development is built.

We are Still In Coalition

A diverse group of American organizations including governmental, private industry, tribal, and faith-based leaders committed to the pursuit of climate action.

Appendix B: Action Step Prioritization Matrix

COST/BUDGET CRITERIA

Cost Effectiveness	Benefits Significantly Outweigh Costs	2
	Benefits Outweigh Costs	1
	Benefits Match Costs	0
	Costs Outweigh Benefits	-1
	Costs Significantly Outweigh Benefits	-2
Relative Cost (Operations)	Action will reduce operating costs for the County	2
	Action will have zero impact on operating costs for the County OR don't know	0
	Action will not reduce and may increase operating costs for the County	-2
Relative Cost (Up-front Costs)	The County can likely accomplish the action without significant upfront costs	2
	The County can accomplish the action with a modest investment OR don't know	0
	Action will not reduce and may increase operating costs	-2
Budget Process	Funds within existing departmental budget CAN be reallocated	2
	Funds would need to be pursued via special offer budget process or via external funding such as federal grants	0

Appendix B: Action Step Prioritization Matrix - continued

FEASIBILITY		
Technological Feasibility and Availability	Technology needed is readily available now	2
	Technology is anticipated to be available during the timeline of the plan OR don't know	0
	Technology is not readily available and is not on track to be available in the timeline of the plan	-2
Current Policies or Ordinances	Policies or ordinances exist now that would support this action	2
	Policies or ordinances would need to be developed for this action to be possible OR don't know	0
	Policies or ordinances currently exist that prohibit or significantly restrict this action	-1
Jurisdictional Control/Ease of Implementation	County is the main actor	2
	County is the regulator or supportive actor	1
	County is the influencer or indirect actor	0

Appendix B: Action Step Prioritization Matrix - continued

EQUITY, ACCESS, AND CO-BENEFITS

Impact on Low-Income Residents	Action helps to reduce the long-term costs for low-income residents (fuel, food, utilities, etc.)	2
	Action has no effect on costs for low-income residents (fuel, food, utilities, etc.) OR don't know	0
	This action does not help to reduce long-term costs for low-income residents (fuel, food, utilities, etc.)	-2
Access	Action improves climate vulnerable communities' access to resources and opportunities	2
	Action neither enhances nor decreases climate vulnerable communities' ability to access to resources and opportunities OR don't know	0
	This action reduces climate vulnerable communities' ability to access resources and opportunities	-2
Historical Injustices	This action addresses past and historical injustices related to race, gender, disability, or other marginalized identities	2
	This action neither addresses or increases past past and historical injustices related to race, gender, disability, or other marginalized identities OR don't know	0
	This action increases past and historical injustices related to race, gender, disability, or other marginalized identities	2
Pollution Prevention	This action eliminates or reduces local pollutants and/or emissions	2
	This action does not impact local pollutants and/or emissions OR don't know what impact this action has	0
	This action does not reduce local pollutants and emissions and may actually increase pollutants and/or emissions	-2

Appendix B: Action Step Prioritization Matrix - continued

EQUITY, ACCESS, AND CO-BENEFITS- continued

Health and Wellbeing	Action contributes to improved public health	2
	Action does not affect public health OR don't know	0
	Action reduces the health of our community	-2
Reliability	Action helps to improve the reliability of the electrical grid, disaster response services, etc.	2
	Action has no impact on the reliability of the electrical grid, disaster response, etc. OR don't know	0
	Action may decrease the reliability of the electrical grid, disaster response services , etc.	-2
Resilience	Action helps improve the resilience of the County, people, and ecosystems to disruptions caused by disaster events (flooding, derecho, pandemics, etc.)	2
	Action does not impact the resilience of the County, people, and ecosystems to disruptions caused by disaster events (flooding, derecho, pandemics, etc.) OR don't know	0
	Action may reduce the resilience of the County, people, and ecosystems to disruptions caused by disaster events (flooding, derecho, pandemics, etc.)	-2

GOAL #1: BE PREPARED FOR FUTURE DISASTERS

OBJECTIVE: Reduce barriers and improve access to disaster resources & supportive services.

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Identify strategies for addressing mold issues that still remain from the August 2020 Derecho.	Medium	Low-medium	CS, PH	2023
Hire Resiliency Coordinator position.	High	Medium	EMA, HR	2023
Implement a Quality Improvement Assessment to see where current interventions are meeting needs and where they are now AND what we can do to make them more effective (funding, policy, collaboration, etc.).	High	Medium-high	CS, PH, EMA	2024

OBJECTIVE: Improve community disaster response systems.

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Review County funding to non-profits with missions related to disaster recovery.	Medium	Low	CS	2023
Explore what geographic locations of LC are receiving disaster and preparedness information to identify gaps.	High	Low-medium	CS	2024
Develop deployable resiliency units.	Medium-high	Medium-high	EMA, CS	2025

CS: Community Services, PH: Public Health, EMA: Emergency Management Agency, HR: Human Resources

OBJECTIVE: Increase knowledge and understanding of emergency response for elected officials and staff responders

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Require FEMA/ESF training for any person who will work in or with the EOC during disaster response.	High	Low	Communications, PH, EMA, LIFTS, Secondary Roads	2023
Hold quarterly all-hazard drills through EMA that involve all jurisdictions in Linn County - including nonprofits.	High	Low	EMA, Communications, LIFTS, Secondary Roads	2023
Develop a Crisis Communications Policy.	High	Medium-high	EMA, Communications, P&A	2023

GOAL #2: REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

OBJECTIVE: Increase sourcing of locally generated, renewable energy

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Complete regular energy audits of County buildings to be updated every 3-5 years and compare financial performance with other County buildings	Medium	Medium	Facilities	2023
Identify opportunities for on-site solar on County-owned land	High	Medium	Facilities, P&A	2023

PH: Public Health, EMA: Emergency Management Agency, LIFTS: Linn Intracounty Facilitating Transportation System, P&A: Policy and Administration

OBJECTIVE: Encourage use of locally-sourced products by Linn County departments

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Create a list of purchase types to be evaluated during the annual review, including ongoing consumables	Medium	Medium	Purchasing, Dept. Heads	2023
Develop an environmentally preferred purchasing policy (EPP)	High	Medium	Purchasing, Dept. Heads	2024
Provide staff resources to train employees on EPP	High	Medium	Purchasing, Dept. Heads	2025

OBJECTIVE: Encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy use in Linn County

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Assess current level of renewable energy adoption by residents	Medium	Medium-high	P&D	Ongoing
Identify opportunities to incentivize renewable energy use through policy and renewable energy codes	High	Medium-high	P&D, P&A, Budget + Finance	2023
Community outreach/education around solar opportunities	Medium-high	Low-medium	Communications, All Relevant Depts.	Ongoing
Apply for state and federal funding to ensure equitable access of renewable technology	High	Medium-high	*	Ongoing

P&D: Planning and Development, P&A: Policy and Administration, *: Sustainability Department

OBJECTIVE: Increase use of fuel-efficient/alternative-fuel vehicles, equipment, and alternative transportation methods

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Complete audit to determine baseline fuel use and cost	Medium	Low-medium	Purchasing, Sheriff's Dept., Conservation, Secondary Roads, LIFTS, Budget + Finance	2023
Incentive employees who can/willing to carpool through Wellness Portal	Medium-high	Medium	HR	2023
Develop a Green Fleet Policy	High	Low	All Depts.	2024

OBJECTIVE: Engage residents in community-wide emission reduction strategies

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Establish a County committee to lead and coordinate development of a community-wide sustainability plan and engage community members in implementation	High	High	*	2023
Create or participate in marketing/outreach/incentive program(s) to achieve waste or energy use reduction via education and outreach	High	Medium	Communications, GIA	Ongoing

LIFTS: Linn Intracounty Facilitating Transportation System, GIA: Green Iowa AmeriCorps, HR: Human Resources, *: Sustainability Department

GOAL #3: SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS AND FARMERS

OBJECTIVE: Use Integrated Pest Management on County lands for weeds, disease, and insect management to minimize chemical use

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Assess existing County pest management processes across all County land (roadside, grounds, + conservation)	High	Low	Facilities, Secondary Roads, Conservation	2023
Enroll facilities in the Good Neighbor Iowa program through UNI (https://goodneighbor Iowa.org/)	Low	Low	Facilities, Secondary Roads, Conservation	2023

OBJECTIVE: Invest in water diversion, capture, infiltration technologies and practices

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Explore rain water harvesting opportunities at County parks	Medium	Low-medium	Conservation	2024
Explore community partnerships to assist with longterm maintenance	High	Low-medium	Conservation	2024
Incorporate rain gardens, bioswales, and other eco-landscaping techniques on available County land	Medium-high	Low-medium	Facilities, Secondary Roads, Conservation	2025

OBJECTIVE: Improve water quality

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Prioritize native tree planting and preserving old trees	Low-medium	Low	Conservation, P&D, NRCS	Ongoing
Coordinate with partners to find new ways to encourage implementation of regenerative agricultural practices	High	Medium	P&D, NRCS	2024

OBJECTIVE: Implement Linn County Food Systems Assessment

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Educate County residents on the why and how of eating local and supporting our local producers through targeted education efforts	Medium-high	Low	GIA	Ongoing
Explore ways we can alter our local regulations to support alternative revenue streams for fruit and vegetable producers	Medium-high	Medium	P&D	2023
Assess the barriers preventing meat and produce processors from locating in Linn County	Medium-high	Low-medium	P&D	2024

P&D: Planning and Development, GIA: Green Iowa AmeriCorps, NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

GOAL #4: IMPROVE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE: Incorporate more green space into built environments

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Inventory and audit available greenspace on County-owned properties	Medium	Low	Secondary Roads, Conservation	2023
Create a greenspace masterplan incorporating gardens, pocket prairies, resiliency hubs, etc. on Linn County property and identify resources for long-term maintenance	Medium-high	Medium	Facilities, Secondary Roads, Conservation	2024

OBJECTIVE: Incorporate native landscaping practices into management of County properties

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Create a plant list of natives that includes native and pollinator-friendly plants for community education and use on County properties	Medium	Low	GIA + Conservation	2023
Provide staff training on benefits and best management practices for native plants and pollinator-friendly landscapes	Medium	Low	Conservation, Facilities, HR	2023
Establish a native plant demonstration garden	Medium-high	Low-medium	Conservation, Facilities	2024

GIA: Green Iowa AmeriCorps, HR: Human Resources

OBJECTIVE: Integrate sustainable guidelines in CIP, other capital projects, and P&D policies

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Adopt codes/ordinances, redevelopment/design standards, and/or programs that facilitate ADA-compliant infill, redevelopment, and adaptable buildings	High	Medium	P&D, P&A	2024
Review ordinances and code to better integrate low impact development practices into County operations	Medium	Low	P&D, P&A	2024
Prioritize at least one of the following in new projects- stormwater management, energy efficiency, renewable energy, EV ready requirements where applicable	High	Low	Facilities, P&A	2025

OBJECTIVE: Perform regular audits of energy usage in county buildings

Action Steps:	Impact	Effort	Who	Year
Complete an internal GHG inventory to measure emissions from County building operations	Medium-high	Low-medium	*	2023
Set up the tools LC currently has to measure energy	Medium-high	Low-medium	Facilities	2024
Explore automated energy assessment tools	Medium-high	Low	IT, Facilities	2024

P&D: Planning and Development, P&A: Policy and Administration, IT: Information Technology,
*: Sustainability Department

*** The Board of Supervisors and the Sustainability Department are default partners in each action step listed above.**

Connect with Linn County



facebook.com/linncountyiowa



twitter.com/linncounty



youtube.com/linncountyiowa



nextdoor.com



linkedin.com/company/linn-county



LinnCountyIowa.gov



319-892-5000



LinnCountyIowa.gov/NotifyMe

